

## REDWOOD CITY

# Wildlife flourishes in Cargill's salt ponds

BY STEPHEN KNIGHT  
For The Daily News

Almost every day since Save The Bay started our campaign to stop Cargill/DMB's plan to pave restorable salt ponds in Redwood City for a new city of 32,000 residents, people have asked, "Do they really think they can get away with paving the Bay?"

Clearly, Minnesota-based Cargill — America's largest private company — and its Arizona-based luxury home developer are confident they have the resources to push their destructive development through, without regard for the facts. One of Cargill/DMB's primary strategies is to mislead the public about basic issues related to their controversial plan, especially the value of the salt ponds to wildlife.

Those who visit the site, especially this time of year, will see lots of birds standing in the ponds and flying overhead. Yet even as regula-

tory agencies and scientists routinely cite the Redwood City salt ponds as critical habitat for endangered species and tens of thousands of migratory shorebirds, Cargill/DMB continue to make outlandish mis-

## GUEST COLUMN

statements about these two square miles of San Francisco Bay salt ponds

Eneas Kane, DMB's chief executive officer told the Arizona Republic on April 18, 2010: "We are taking these 2 square miles of land that is inhospitable to man or beast and creating something different out of it."

DMB's top Redwood City-based executive, John Bruno, had this to say to the San Francisco Business Times on Aug. 31, 2008: "The fact is that it's devoid of any natural habitat because of the high-saline environment that is here. Any bird who tried to land here would get his fanny burned."

And one of DMB's many paid

consultants went so far as to tell El Mensajero that "there is nothing alive" on the salt ponds. Connie Guerrero on Aug. 2, 2010, stressed that this area is "not the Bay": "The area is industrialized and there is nothing alive," Guerrero said. When presented with a bird flying over the salt ponds, Guerrero said that "occasionally" there are birds out there but they don't land "because they burn their legs" with salt.

Because a picture can be worth 1,000 words, Save The Bay created an online album of photos and video of life in the salt ponds, which clearly rebuts such blatant misstatements. You can find them at [DontPaveMyBay.org/Do-Facts-Matter](http://DontPaveMyBay.org/Do-Facts-Matter). These images illustrate the critical habitat provided by the salt ponds for wildlife — in the very area that Cargill/DMB proposes to build their new city of 30,000 people.

We have to ask, do facts matter? We think they do.

*Stephen Knight is political director for Save The Bay.*

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